

Before the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of 2002 Biennial Regulatory Review -
Review of the Commission's Broadcast Ownership Rules
and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202
of the Telecommunications Act of 1996,
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking,
MM Docket No. 02-277, (rel. Sept. 23, 2002)

To: The Secretary, FCC Commissioners, and Chief, Media Bureau

I wish to comment on Docket No. 02-277, the Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry. In fact, I would prefer that the prior "public service" standards be re-instated and expanded to include free access to specified media time slots for political campaigns.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the current FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have an open, informed discussion from a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

In addition, I support the FCC's plan to hold a public hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA in February 2003. I strongly encourage the Commission to hold similar hearings in New England and other parts of the country. I hope the FCC will solicit the widest possible participation from the public. The rarified, lawyerly atmosphere of an FCC rulemaking may not be an appropriate decision-making venue when questions as profound as the freedom of public speech are at stake. I encourage the Commissioners to come out and meet some of the people who do not have a financial interest in this issue, but a social interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is important that the Commission take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Thank you, very sincerely,

Edward R. Savage, Ed.D.